

REMARKS

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 18-24, 27, 33, and 40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Fofonoff et al. (U.S. Patent 6,022,445)

Claims 18 and 33, the elected independent claims, have been amended to include the limitation that a sleeve is provided around the blank and has an adjustable length. This limitation was originally claimed in claim 41, which was held to be allowable if rewritten in independent form and which is now canceled. The limitations of the intervening claims, however, were not included in amended claims 18 and 33 because Applicant believes that these limitations are not necessary to establish patentability.

Claim 24, which included the step of providing the sleeve has been incorporated in claim 18 and is now canceled. Claims 25 and 34 included formal amendments to accommodate the changes made to other claims.

Claims 19-23 and 27 directly or indirectly depend on amended claim 18, which is believed to be patentable. Claim 40 depends on patentable claim 33. Accordingly, these dependent claims are believed to be allowable as well.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 25-26 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fofonoff et al. (U.S. Patent 6,022,445) in view of Wilson et al. (U.S. Patent 1,809,260).

Claims 33-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fofonoff et al. (U.S. Patent 6,022,445) in view of Wilson et al. (U.S. Patent 1,809,260) and optionally in view of Anderson (U.S. Patent 2,663,902).

Claims 25-26 and 28 directly or indirectly depend on amended claim 18 and are thus believed to be patentable.

Claim 33 has been amended as indicated above, and claims 34-39 depend on the amended claim 33 and should be allowable.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §112

Claim 37 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 ¶2 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention.

The lack of antecedent basis for "the first part or second part fo the sleeve" has been cured by changing this claim's dependency from claim 33 to claim 35.

New Claim

A new independent method claim 47 has been added providing a method which, after spearation of the blak from the mandrel provides further medium to push the mandrel outward from the blank. This limitation is found in the specification page 11, lines 5 and 6.

Wilson's and Anderson's devices make it physically impossible for the mandrel to move from the pressure alone. Fofonoff describes the mandrel removal process in column 6, lines 54-58 in connection with Fig. 4, where he uses a tool 50 and tugs on the mandrel to move it out of the sleeve.

Accordingly, applicant believes that moving the mandrel with pressure alone is not suggested by the prior art and that claim 47 is patentable.

CONCLUSION

Applicant believes that the amendments made render all examined claims patentable.

Respectfully submitted,
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